

S.A.F.E. FY 2007 Report



“Raising a fire safe generation of children”

What is S.A.F.E.?

The Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) Program is a grant program to local fire departments designed to put trained firefighter-educators in the classroom to conduct fire and life safety education programs in grades Pre-K through 12. The



primary mission is to enable students to recognize the dangers of fire and more specifically, the fire hazards that tobacco products pose. Through the S.A.F.E. program, firefighters are trained as public educators to deliver age-appropriate fire and life safety lessons in close coordination with classroom teachers and health educators.

Funding and Participation

During the first seven years, S.A.F.E. was funded by the tobacco tax, better known as the Health Protection Fund, because smoking is the leading cause of fire deaths. FY '07 marked the 12th year funding in the amount of \$1,078,666, this year it came from General Revenues in the state budget. The grant was shared by 203 fire departments.

Partnerships in the Classroom

The S.A.F.E. Program also provides a working partnership among firefighters, classroom teachers, and health educators. By working together, key fire safety behaviors such as *Stop, Drop, and Roll*; *Making and Practicing Home Escape Plans*; *Reporting Fires and Emergencies* are introduced to children. Often, these fire safety behaviors are easily combined with a math, science, language arts, health, or physical education lesson to complement the teacher's classroom curriculum.

Department of Fire Services Training

The credibility of the S.A.F.E. Program rests on properly trained firefighters. The high quality of the fire and life safety education specialist is the foundation of the S.A.F.E. Program. The fire educator's enthusiasm and commitment to the S.A.F.E. Program and its students are critical. The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy offers a variety of training programs for fire educators, including a week long class *Public Fire and Life Safety Educator* that is based on the standard set out in the National Fire Protection Association's Standard 1035 *Professional Qualifications for Public Fire and Life Safety Educator*. In addition, the Public Education Unit in the Office of the State Fire Marshal provides programmatic support to local S.A.F.E. Programs through in-service training, site visits and technical assistance.

Certification of Fire and Life Safety Educators to National Standards

In 2003, the Massachusetts Fire Training Council established a voluntary certification program for Public Fire and Life Safety Educator- Level 1. Administered through the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, firefighters must pass a written exam and they are required to provide documentation of prior field experience in teaching young children, school-age children, and adults before submitting to a practical examination requiring firefighters to demonstrate their teaching skills. This certification program also contains a

re-certification process requiring educators to document continued field experience and continuing education.

Fire Safety Houses

Every fire department in Massachusetts has a fire safety house available to them for use in their S.A.F.E. program. A fire safety house is a recreational vehicle trailer that is outfitted like a home interior, including a bedroom where the door can get hot, the room can fill with theatrical smoke and children can practice going out the window and down a ladder to safety. The different rooms of the fire safety house set the stage for discussing the prevention of home fire and burn hazards as well as giving youngsters a fun and safe way to practice a home escape plan. The fire safety house has proven to be a valuable educational tool for a S.A.F.E. educator to use when teaching key fire safety behaviors. It also used as an evaluation tool at the conclusion of a program where students can demonstrate to instructors what they learned in the classroom lessons.



Fire Safety House in Oxford



Fire Safety House in Oxford

In FY 2006, a five-year plan was implemented for replacing the 15 fire safety houses; three each year as funding permits.

Fire Safety House in Pittsfield





Hazard Houses

Every fire department in Massachusetts also has a *Hazard House* available to them for use in their S.A.F.E. programs. It is a large tabletop display of a home that can be used to teach many key fire and life safety behaviors. With electricity, the smoke alarms actually work, and with Plexiglas the smoke can be seen rising up the stairwell from a child playing with a lighter, from a man falling asleep smoking in an overstuffed chair, and from a pan on the stove. The home is

filled with many hazards, which can be “corrected” by folding over a flap. As the instructor moves from room to room they can discuss prevention and removing home hazards. It is designed to address fire and burn prevention as well as of the major injury prevention topics.

Goshen S.A.F.E. Educator Using Hazard House to Teach

Partnerships in the Classroom

The S.A.F.E. Program also provides a working partnership



Granby Lt Dorval Reading to Students

among firefighters, classroom teachers, and health

educators. The core of the S.A.F.E. Program is to deliver age-appropriate lessons on the key fire safety behaviors that are linked to meeting the objectives in the Department of Education’s Curriculum Frameworks. By working together, key fire safety behaviors such as *Stop, Drop, and Roll*; *Making and Practicing Home*

Escape Plans; *Reporting Fires and Emergencies* are introduced to children. Often, these fire safety

behaviors are easily combined with a math, science, language arts, health, or physical education lesson to complement the teacher’s classroom curriculum.



Teaching ‘Stop, Drop, & Roll’ in Groton

Proving Public Education Works

In the twelve years of the S.A.F.E. Program, we have identified more than 226 “young heroes”, children who have used the fire and life safety lessons they learned in the classroom during a real life emergency to save themselves or others. We are proud of these *young heroes*. It is sad anytime someone is faced with an emergency, but these situations could easily have been more tragic if these youngsters had not known what to do.

The report that follows summarizes the activity of the FY '07 S.A.F.E. Program. We are particularly proud of the innovative programs the local S.A.F.E. educators have created and the commitment these communities have demonstrated in “Raising a fire safe generation of children”.



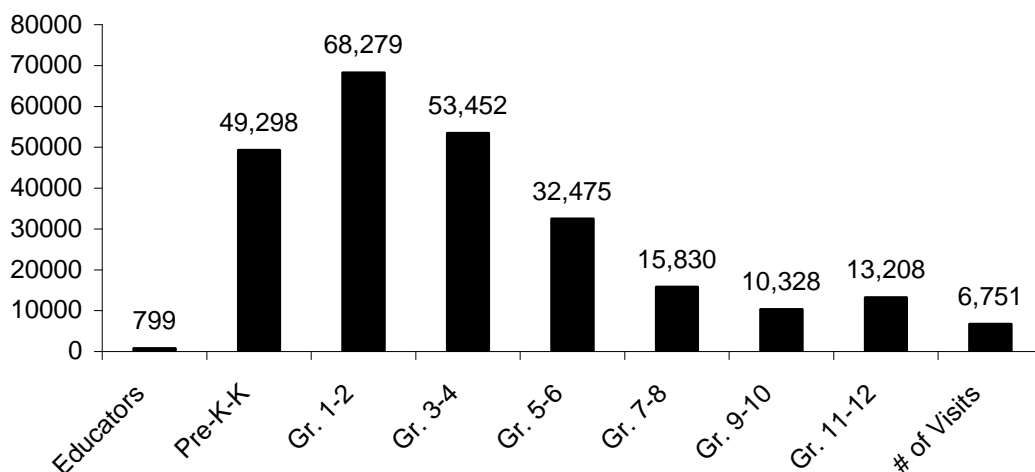
Crawl low under smoke in Groton

Information about the FY 2007 S.A.F.E. Program

- Total number of communities receiving S.A.F.E. FY 2007 grants: **203**
This total has decreased from the **223** communities in FY 2006 who received S.A.F.E. grants but is substantially greater than the **130** communities who initially received S.A.F.E. grants in FY 1996.
- Over **799** firefighters were involved in teaching fire safety education to children through classroom visits and community events.
- Number of firefighter visits to classrooms: **6,751**
- Number of students who received fire safety education statewide: **242,870**

The following chart lists the number of students visited by firefighters in each grade group. It shows that the grades reached the most by local S.A.F.E. Programs are grades 1-2, followed by grades 3-4 and pre K-K. Also note that middle and high school grade levels continue to show increases in the number of older students receiving the full benefits of the S.A.F.E. Program.

**Number of Children Reached by Firefighters
FY 2007**



Child Fire Deaths Drop 2/3 Since Start of S.A.F.E.

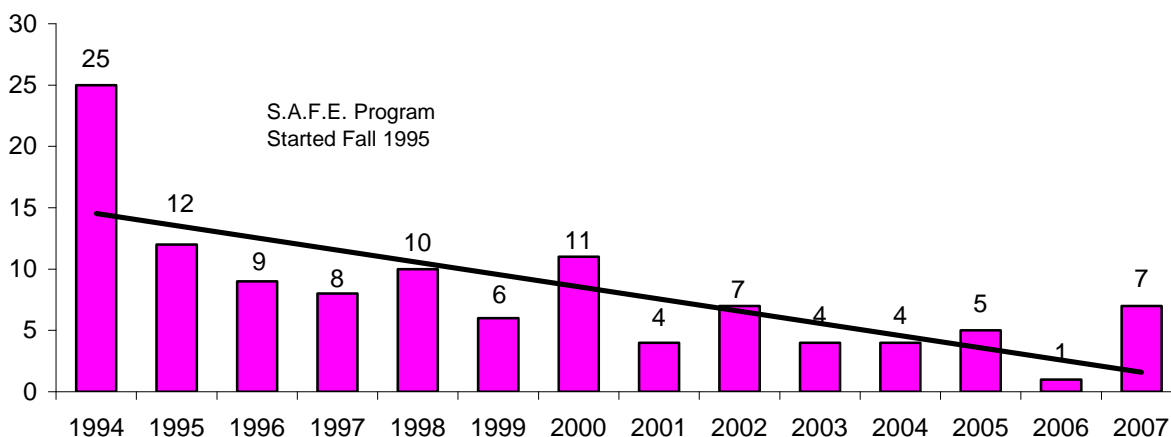
The average annual number of fire deaths of children under age 18 has fallen by two-thirds, 66%, since the start of the S.A.F.E. Program in the fall of 1995. Since fire death numbers fluctuate quite a bit from year to year, it is helpful to look both at the trend line in the graph below and at averages over several years.

During the twelve full years that the S.A.F.E. Program has been in effect, from 1996 to 2007, the average number of child fire deaths per year is 6.3. In the twelve years prior to the S.A.F.E. Program, 1983-1994, the average number of child fire deaths per year was 18.7.

In calendar 2007, seven children died in fires in Massachusetts.

The one thing that is happening in Massachusetts to improve fire safety exclusively for this age group, that is not also happening to all other age groups, is consistent, comprehensive, statewide, school-based fire safety education.

Children Fire Deaths 1994 - 2007



S.A.F.E. Program Evaluation

Over the last several years the need for statistical data to show the effectiveness of individual S.A.F.E. programs has been stressed. Some cities and towns have done a tremendous job compiling this data by scoring pretests, post-tests, essays, homework assignments, and demonstrations. For instance home escape plans can be scored using a checklist of items that are included in a good plan. Essays can be scored using a rubric or a checklist. This data is used to prove that this program is effective by documenting that the students are actually learning what we think we are teaching. This will impact continued funding as well as continuing partnerships with schools. Verbal questions and answers are an acceptable means of evaluation ONLY if the questions and the answers are written down. Recognizing the time constraints on public fire educators and their classroom partners, the Public Education Unit strongly advises local departments to select at least one grade that is consistently evaluated year after year. This will provide a good baseline on whether the students in that grade have learned what instructors intended to teach. Evaluations need to be done for the instructors as well as for the students to make sure that the messages are being conveyed effectively. Giving the teachers an opportunity for feedback can help improve the performance of S.A.F.E. educators and keep the partnership strong.

The Fire Data and Public Education Unit of the State Fire Marshal's Office would be happy to assist you in producing some proper techniques for evaluation. Here are some examples of how some communities have evaluated their students:

Pre K & K: 92% of students were able to demonstrate *Stop, Drop & Roll* following the Life Safety Educator's presentation.

Gr 1 & 2: 90% of students successfully completed a *Home Escape Plan*, which was reviewed by their classroom teacher after the Life Safety Educator's presentation.

Gr 3 & 4: 93% of students were able to communicate *General Fire Safety* tips in an essay, following the Life Safety Educator's presentation.

Gr 5 & 6: 89% of students were able to demonstrate understanding of *Camping Safety* in a homework assignment following the Life Safety Educator's presentation.

Gr 11 & 12: 95% of students were able to explain the Firefighter/EMT's role as a *Community Helper* on Sports Injury Prevention, following the Life Safety Educator's presentation.

S.A.F.E. “Young Heroes”

During Fiscal Year 2007, the 12th year of the Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) Program, the Office of the State Fire Marshal recognized **5 children** for using the fire safety education that they received in school to directly affect the outcome of an emergency. In FY '08 nine such children were recognized, bringing the total to **226**.

The following list describes the actions of what we call the S.A.F.E. “Young Heroes”.

13th Year of the Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) Program (2007-2008)

(9 Heroes in FY'08)

226 *heroes and counting!!!*

Charlton

◆ Nicholas Falcone

On March 2, 2008, at approximately 1:00pm, 6-year-old Nicholas came to the rescue of his 4-year-old sister, Mia, after she began choking on a jawbreaker and could not breathe. Nicholas called for his mother to come quickly but before his mother could get there Nicholas began to perform the Heimlich maneuver and successfully dislodged the jawbreaker. Mrs. Falcone taught Nicholas the Heimlich maneuver last year and was proud that her son remembered the instructions and performed the Heimlich maneuver to save his sister's life.

Halifax

◆ Scott Hunt Jr.

On Wednesday June 4, 2008 at approximately 3:00 a.m., 17-year-old Scott saw fire from his bathroom window. Scott ran over to his neighbor's house to alert the occupant that the house was on fire. Scott continued to bang on door until the occupant awoke and evacuated the home. Moments later a propane tank exploded leveling the home. Scott received his S.A.F.E. training at Silver Lake Regional High School where he is in the 10th grade.

Mansfield

◆ Paige Prevett

On November 10, 2007, at 2:50am., 10-year old Paige Prevett's mother called 9-1-1 reporting that she was feeling some unexplained dizziness. Soon after Mrs. Prevett called for help she was no longer able to speak to the dispatcher. Paige then calmly got on the phone and gave the dispatcher the location of their home as well as updates on her mother's status. Paige remained calm both while on the phone with the dispatcher and while responders were at the home attending to her mother. Paige received her S.A.F.E. education through the Mansfield Fire Department at the Jordan/Jackson School.

◆ Andrew Ducharmae

On January 25, 2008 at 5:00pm, 9-year old Andrew Ducharmae was at home with his mother and 5-year old brother Kyle when their mom had a seizure and was unconscious on the floor. Andrew called 9-1-1 to get medical help for his mother who has a history of a brain bleed.

Andrew received his S.A.F.E. education at the Jordan/Jackson Elementary School from the Mansfield Fire Department in March 2007.

Merrimac

♦ Jack Gilbert

On the evening of October 3, 2007, 4-year old Jack was at home with his family when smoke began pouring into his home from the family's wood burning stove. Jack remained calm and led his family outside to their meeting place from which his parents called 9-1-1. Earlier that same day, Jack's pre-school class had learned about fire safety from the Merrimac Fire Department, along with the help of Jake the Fire Safety Dog, as part of the fire and life safety program which emphasized, "Get Out and Stay Out."

♦ Kayley Judson

On August 15, 2007 at 11:46am, 6-year old Kayley Judson was at home when she discovered that her 2-year old brother had accidentally turned on a stove burner that ignited a cloth rag. Kayley immediately told her mother that she was taking her brother and 4-month old sister out of the house and to their family's meeting place. Meanwhile, Kayley's mother turned off the stove burner, evacuated the house, and called 9-1-1. Kayley and her family were waiting safely outside their house when the Merrimac Fire Department arrived at their home. Kayley learned her S.A.F.E. education the year before at Merrimac's 2006 Fire Department Open House during Fire Prevention Week as well as through Sweetsir Elementary School's Fire Prevention Month activities.

North Reading

♦ Kiernan Schulz

Four-year old Kiernan Schulz was listening when the North Reading Police Department came to the Hilltop Nursery School around Halloween to explain calling 9-1-1 to get help in an emergency. On November 28, 2007 he noticed a fire in the oven and told his mother to call 9-1-1 right away, which she did.

Pittsfield

♦ Matthew Gimlewicz

On the evening of November 8, 2007, 10-year old Matthew Gimlewicz was at home with his mother when an unattended pot on the stove caught fire. While Matthew's mother attempted to extinguish the blaze with a sink hose, Matthew ran out of the house and dialed 9-1-1 from a neighbor's home. Capt. Steven Peaslee of the Pittsfield Fire Department applauded Matthew's "calm and controlled" emergency call. "I credit that child with acting responsibly and maturely," Capt. Peaslee said, "He should be commended."

Princeton

♦ Dina Allard

On Saturday April 19, 2008, the Princeton Fire Department responded to a call for a reported permit fire that was out of control and in the woods. The fire did extend into the woods and was extinguished. Dina Allard was a 2nd grader at the Thomas Prince Elementary School and had a

S.A.F.E. class the week before. Dina noticed the fire and called 9-1-1, giving the dispatcher her name, address and the report of fire.

12th Year of the Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) Program (2006-2007)

(5 Heroes in FY'07)

Barnstable

♦ Tyler McHenry

On March 30, 2007 at 4:19 p.m. Tyler McHenry, a 4th grader at Centerville Elementary School, was at home with his father who suddenly became dizzy, passed out and struck his head on a piece of furniture. Tyler remained calm and recalled the lessons he had received in school, as a first grade student, from the Centerville-Osterville Marstons Mills Fire Department S.A.F.E. Program. Tyler quickly dialed 9-1-1 to summon medical help for his father. He remained with his injured father until the arrival of emergency responders. Tyler's actions were responsible for his father's prompt treatment and speedy recovery.

Fitchburg

♦ Jared B. McCloskey

On November 1, 2006 at 3 a.m. 12-year old Jared was awakened by the family dog. As he exited his bedroom the smoke alarms had just begun to sound and he noticed flames on the rear porch outside the kitchen with smoke in the house. He immediately woke his 2-year old brother Alexander and his 1-year old sister Amber, wrapped them in blankets and led them safely out of the house. He then woke his parents and advised them that the house was on fire and ensured their exit from the house. As they were leaving, Jared ran upstairs to waken his Uncle Jon Barto, his wife Beth and their two children, 3-year old Megan and 8-month old Abigail. Jared's father was able to extinguish the porch fire with a garden hose prior to the fire department's arrival. Jared received his S.A.F.E. education in the first grade and credits it with teaching him to respond correctly to the fire emergency that saved nine people including himself.

Mansfield

♦ Lauren Melton and Kelsey Attaya

On October 10, 2006 9-year old Lauren Melton and 10-year old Kelsey Attaya got off the bus together and heard a strange noise. They quickly realized it was a smoke alarm coming from a neighbor's house and saw smoke coming from a second floor window and noticed there were no cars in the driveway. They consciously split up and each called 9-1-1 from her own house to report the fire. They waited in front of the house to guide responding firefighters and alert them that the family dog was possibly trapped inside. The firefighters rescued the dog that stayed with the girls until the neighbors came home. Firefighters credit the girls' actions with allowing them to quickly confine and contain the fire reducing the damage to the home and for saving the dog. Both girls credit the Mansfield S.A.F.E. Program for teaching them what to do in a fire emergency.

Marlborough

♦ 6-year old Boy

On December 21, 2006 at 10:30 a.m. a 6-year old boy called 9-1-1 to report a medical emergency saving an adult family member's life. He had received fire and life safety education from his parents and through the S.A.F.E. Program the year before in Kindergarten.

MFA Public Education Training

MFA Public Fire and Life Safety Educator

The Mass. Firefighting Academy offered the *Public Fire and Life Safety Educator course (PF&LSE)* and had 70 students complete it in FY 2007. This course is a 5-day program designed to provide a community with the basis for a solid public education program and is designed to properly train the lead S.A.F.E. educator. The course covers child development, how people learn, with focus on different learning styles and the seven intelligences, lesson planning, curricula evaluation, public speaking, program evaluation, connecting to the curriculum frameworks, and concludes with students presenting a segment of instruction on a given topic for a specified age group. The class uses the *MA Public Fire and Life Safety Education Curriculum Planning Guidebook* extensively to learn to develop age-appropriate lesson plans using the key fire and life safety behaviors and connect with the Department of Education's curriculum frameworks.

Other S.A.F.E. Events

12th Annual Massachusetts Fire and Safety Public Education Conference and 2006 Fire & Life Safety Educator of the Year Award September 28-29, 2006

The 12th annual Fire and Life Safety Public Education Conference was held on September 28-29, 2006 in Westford, MA. This year's title was **Teamwork: The Road to a Championship**. Over 200 firefighter-educators, classroom teachers, school administrators and safety officers, EMTs, nurses, elder service workers, health educators and other injury prevention professionals attended the two-day conference of workshop and general sessions. John DiPietro, a managing partner of Advanced Business Concepts/DiPietro (ABC/D) delivered the keynote address *You Don't Have to be Perfect to be Great!* The conference offered core workshops for new fire and life safety educators, workshops on new ideas, program and teaching techniques to keep all life safety educator current, and some to continue to challenge and develop the skills of more experienced life safety educators. The *2006 Fire and Life Safety Educator of the Year Award* was presented to North Adams Firefighter David R. Simon. FF Simon dedicated a great deal of time to the S.A.F.E. program and has implemented specialized programs for middle school students, been certified as a child passenger safety technician, secured grant money for his programs, and created partnerships to expand the life and fire safety programs for local elderly citizen.

Shriners and S.A.F.E. Educators at Eastfield Mall

Saturday October 11, 2006

The Department of Fire Services' Public Education Unit, western Massachusetts' S.A.F.E. Educators and Shriners from the Melha Temple teamed up to host a fire safety and burn awareness day at the Eastfield Mall in Springfield, Massachusetts from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on October 11, 2006. The goal was to extend the celebration of national Fire Prevention Week, October 8-14, 2006.

In addition to tables with literature, safety information and red fire hats, there were a variety of displays, interactive exhibits and fire safety information for all ages including:

- ◆ Practice calling 9-1-1 and reporting and emergency
- ◆ Meet Sparky the Fire Dog
- ◆ Meet Patches and Pumper
- ◆ Let your children try on firefighter gear
- ◆ Shriners/Mason's Child Identification Program CHIPS.

The Springfield Fire Department also brought a fire engine for the children despite the pouring rain. Several area fire departments participated, some from as far away as Pittsfield and Shelburne Falls.

Fire Prevention Week 2006

National Fire Prevention Week was October 8-14, 2006. S.A.F.E. educators across the state were involved in activities to promote fire and life safety to all segments of their communities. Many fire departments spent the month of October conducting their school programs visiting hundreds of classrooms; hosting class tours of the fire station; visiting senior centers; and holding fire station open houses open to the entire community.

Distribution of Resources

The S.A.F.E. Program was able to purchase copies of curricula for distribution to the local fire departments. Each fire department was provided with a free copy of *Remembering When: A Fall and Fire Prevention Program for Older Adults*, one set of the *Learn Not to Burn Resource Books* (lessons for Kindergarten – 3rd grade), a list of the licensed day care centers in their community and an equivalent number of *Learn Not to Burn PreSchool Programs* in both English and Spanish. Distribution started at the 2005 conference, continued at the in-service and continues today.

Partnerships Formed in the S.A.F.E. Program.

The S.A.F.E. Program provides fire departments with an opportunity to form partnerships with various organizations when educating children.

During FY'07, these organizations included the following:

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|---|--|
| AC&M Fire Extinguisher Co. | Local Kiwanis Clubs |
| Apple Home Health Care Inc. | Local Lions Club |
| Big Y Supermarkets | Local Mason Lodges |
| Bob's Store | Local National Guard Reserve Units |
| Bruegger's Bagels | Local Police Associations |
| Burger King Restaurants | Local Police Departments |
| Century Manufacturing Co. | Local Police Unions |
| Dairy Queen Restaurants | Local Public Libraries |
| DCR Forestry Division | Local Recreation Department |
| Earth Designs | Local Sheriff's Departments |
| Elevator/Escalator Safety Foundation | Local Visiting Nurses Associations |
| Fall River Tobacco Control | Local Youth Centers |
| Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary Groups | Lowe's Home Safety Council |
| Fiske's General Store | Mass. Dental Society |
| Fleet Bank | Mass. Mutual Insurance Co. |
| Hannaford Supermarkets | McCue Insurance Agency |
| Hanover Mall | McDonalds Restaurants |
| Home Depot Stores | Mothers Against Drunk Driving |
| JP Gallagher Construction Comp. | Mt. Wachusett Community College |
| Liberty Tree Mall | National SAFE Kids Campaign |
| Lista International | Out Post Farm |
| Local Boys Clubs | Papa Gino's Restaurants |
| Local Business Associations | Paper Heroes |
| Local Cable Companies | Parker Hannifin Corp. |
| Local Chambers of Commerce | Salavadore Auto Group |
| Local Colleges | Sharp Image Screen printing |
| Local Councils on Aging | Shaw's Supermarkets |
| Local Credit Unions | Shriners Burn Hospital |
| Local Dunkin' Donuts | Shriver Job Corp. |
| Local Elks Lodges | Sir Speedy Printing and Copying Center |
| Local Exchange Clubs | Stop & Shop Stores |
| Local Fire Associations | Students Against Drunk Driving |
| Local Fire Explorer Posts | TRIAD |
| Local Fire Unions | Tuft's University |
| Local Girls Clubs | Wal-Mart Stores |
| Local Head Start Programs | Whitin Community Center |
| Local Health Departments | YMCA's |
| Local Hospitals | |
| Local Housing Authorities | |

Community Education Activities

The following examples of innovative local S.A.F.E. Programs clearly demonstrate how fire departments continue to be creative in their community public education efforts. These community events are in addition to the core classroom-based S.A.F.E. programs.

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Arlington | Town Day, Senior Education, Vials of Life |
| Ashfield | Ashfield Fall Festival, Open House |
| Attleboro | Health Fair, Open House, Car Seat Clinic |
| Ayer | Senior Breakfast, Camp Pete, S.A.F.E. Softball Tournament, S.A.F.E Day at the Bank |
| Bellingham | Senior Citizen Health Fair, Touch a Truck, Displays at Wal-Mart, Home Depot and Toys R Us |
| Berlin | Christmas in Berlin-pictures with Santa |
| Bourne | Open House, Bike Helmet Rodeo, Monument Beach Night Out |
| Concord | Picnic in the Park |
| Danvers | Kids Muster, Health Fairs, Open House |
| Douglas | Oktoberfest, Open House, Christmas Safety |
| East Brookfield | Easter Egg Hunt |
| Holden | Babysitter Program, Open House |
| Mansfield | Pasta Dinner, Downtown Sidewalk Fair, All Night Senior Party, Canoe River Fair |
| Maynard | Cold Water/Ice Safety, Safe Babysitter |
| Southborough | Fire Station Tours, Dorm Fire Safety |
| Springfield | National Night Out, Health and Safety Fairs, Basketball Hall of Fame Family Fun Days |
| Stow | Stow Springfest, Pompo Picnic, Wash the Fire truck Day, Open House |
| Tyngsboro | Babysitter Programs, Health & Safety Fair, Open House |
| Upton | Open House, Girl Scout Troops, Boy Scout Troops |
| Waltham | Safety Day, Summer Camp Programs, Department Open House |
| Wayland | Halloween Party, Open House |
| Yarmouth | Child Seat Safety Program, Fire Corps |